United Nations ECE/TRADE/C/WP.7/GE.1/2015/6

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
9 February 2015

Original: English

Economic Commission for Europe

Committee on Trade

Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards

Specialized Section on Standardization of Fresh Fruit and Vegetables

Sixty-third session
Geneva, 21 -24 April 2015
Item 5(b) of the provisional agenda

Apples – position of WAPA

The following contribution by the World Apple and Pear Association (WAPA) was submitted to the Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards at its November 2014 session. The Working Party requested the Specialized Section to consider the topic.

GE.15-02431 (E)

1502431

Please recycle

UNECE STANDARD FFV-50 – Apples
Working party on Agricultural Quality Standards
Geneva, 3-5 November 2014

1. The Seventieth session of the Working Party (WP) on Agricultural Quality Standards will take place in Geneva from 3-5 November 2014. Following the technical discussion at the Specialized Section on Standardization of Fresh Fruit and Vegetables on 28 April-1 May 2014, UNECE is expecting to adopt early November a new marketing standard for apples, based on the latest version of the draft standard as circulated by UNECE on 11 July.

2. In a letter dated 16th January 2014 responding to an UNECE request on criteria for a variety to be economically important, WAPA[1] indicated that 39 leading apple varieties represent 82% of the world production and trade. These varieties are considered internationally and by the supply chain as the "*most economically important*" varieties and hence worth to be recognised as such in the standard. Unfortunately, the WAPA position, on behalf of the international apple and pear community, was ignored. The latest version of the draft standard (11 July 2014) is now also including a large number of mutants in the list of varieties. Rather than limiting the list of varieties to the most commonly internationally traded varieties, the UNECE draft standard is extending its scope.

3. While recognising the benefit of having a dynamic and evolving list of varieties, WAPA is not in favour of such an enlarged list of varieties. Indeed, an extensive list of varieties covering as well mutants would:

   - complicate packing operations,
   - lead to additional costs and problems on labelling,
   - complicate discussion on specification within the supply chain,
   - create problems relating to controls,
   - confuse consumers about varieties.

4. The information about mutants is mainly relevant for growers from a production perspective, in particular for the adaptation of specific sub-varieties to particular conditions of a growing region. Mutants' names are not relevant from a marketing perspective and in most of the case the production level will not match a threshold of economic importance.

5. Separately, WAPA also welcomes the progress made by the revision of the standard to recognise "miniature apples", provided they reach a minimum brix level of 12°. However, more work still needs to be done on the determination of varieties which should be part of this positive list of miniature apples.

6. In the report of the sixty-second session of the WP on Agricultural Quality Standards (Section on Fresh Fruit and Vegetables), it was recommended that the revised list of varieties will be sent to WAPA for consultation to seek WAPA members' opinion. Such a consultation did not formally take place, meaning that the new standard will not reflect the expertise available from the international apple and pear sector represented in WAPA.

7. On this background, WAPA calls UNECE and its members to postpone the vote on the new apples standard until a more in-depth discussion takes place with WAPA experts, e.g. at the upcoming meeting of the sixty-third session of the section on Fresh Fruit and Vegetables in April/May 2015.

---

[1] **WORLD APPLE AND PEAR ASSOCIATION** Rue des Trèves 49-51 bte 8 • 1040 Brussels • Belgium • Tel: +32 2 777 15 80 • Fax: +32 2 777 15 81 • e-mail: info@wapa-association.org, www.wapa-association.org